



Wirral Association **NASUWT** NEWYEAR'S LETTER

December 2015

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

EXCESSIVE WORKLOAD LEADING TO SELECTIVE STRIKE ACTION!

Members in three Wirral Secondary Schools are preparing for Selective Strike Action as workload has increased to unacceptable levels and their concerns are being ignored by School Leadership. Local Officers and our National Executive Member have met with members in four schools so far this year and indicative ballots show that the majority of members in these schools are prepared to take cumulative selective strike action to reduce workload and regain some work/life balance.

Members have completed the NASUWT Wellbeing Survey and the results have shown that they are doing tasks they should not be doing, attending too many meetings and are facing unreasonable demands in their Appraisals. One school head teacher has already responded very positively and met with our Officers and School Representatives to reduce workload demands and setting up a School Joint Consultative Committee of union members to open up clearer channels of communication and consultation. We hope others will follow suit.



ARE YOUR GOVERNORS FIT FOR PURPOSE?

In the last academic year, governing bodies at almost 500 schools were deemed to be failing so badly by Ofsted inspectors that the Chief Inspector of Schools, Sir Michael Wilshaw, is calling for all governors and trustees to be given mandatory training so they are up to the job, and for chairs and vice-chairs to be paid in order to attract the most able people to challenging schools.

The Chief Inspector's comments reflect many of the NASUWT's longstanding concerns about the quality of governance in too many schools. While there are some excellent governing bodies that do a commendable job in providing challenge and support to school leaders, this is by no means the case everywhere. In particular, the Chief Inspector is absolutely right to point to the failure of governors to block the outrageously excessive remuneration packages given to some head teachers.



Sir Michael at a Governors' Meeting!

Governance is central to ensuring that the education system benefits from well-run schools. The Chief Inspector's proposal that chairs of governing bodies should be paid is an idea that has been examined in the past by the Ministerial Working Party on school governance under the last Labour Government. While this idea has

obvious and immediate appeal, the implications of introducing such a system across all schools in England would be significant, not least in terms of the costs that would be involved. There may be more achievable methods of improving governance, such as more effective training, that might yield positive results.

A key concern not addressed in the Chief Inspector's comments is the differences in governance arrangements between maintained schools and academies. Unlike maintained schools, academies have substantial discretion over the ways in which governance is undertaken and some schools and multi-academy trusts have used this freedom to establish opaque and ambiguous governance structures that undermine effective internal school accountability.

N.B. CHANGE OF VENUE **LOCAL EXECUTIVE AND SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES' NETWORK**

On Tuesday 8th December
At 4.15-5.30 p.m.

The President, Sandra Burrows, is unable to host this meeting in her school. The meeting will now be hosted by the Vice-President, Jackie Webb, at the Hospital School, Joseph Paxton Campus, 157 Park Road North, Birkenhead, CH41 0EZ

ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

STARK WARNING ON TEACHER RETENTION CRISIS

NQTs from across the country gathered in Birmingham on 21st November for the NASUWT's Newly Qualified Teacher Seminar to discuss the challenges facing them as new teachers and to engage in professional development workshops. The conference heard concerns from new teachers about the impact of excessive workload and bureaucracy on their ability to focus on teaching and learning. Many newly qualified teachers are also being denied their statutory rights and entitlements during their induction year

A real-time electronic poll of NQTs attending the seminar found that:

- More than one in ten (11%) say they only intend to stay in teaching for 12 months. Nearly a fifth (19%) say they intend to stay only for a maximum of two to five years;
- Nearly a third (31%) were not in receipt of the full 10% reduction in teaching time they are entitled to during their induction year;
- A fifth said they were rarely or never provided with adequate support and guidance from their induction mentor. 5% had not even been provided with a named mentor;
- Nearly a third (30%) say they can rarely or never access appropriate external professional development;
- Excessive workload was the biggest problem experienced during the induction year, followed by a lack of support to deal with poor pupil behaviour;
- While a quarter rated the quality of support received so far from their school as outstanding, nearly one in five (18%) branded it inadequate;
- The majority (61%) said secure employment with fair access to pay progression would most encourage them to stay in teaching long-term.



The number of NQTs saying they do not intend to remain in the profession in the short or medium-term is extremely worrying, but unfortunately not surprising. The combination of excessive workload, real terms cuts to teachers' pay and the failure in too many cases to provide new teachers with the support they are entitled to is driving precious new recruits out of the profession.

New teachers are the future of the profession. Official figures show that the number of recruits to initial teaching training is falling and if those who do go through training are driven to leave in the early years of their career, the future for teaching and by extension, for children and young people, looks bleak. The Government cannot continue to ignore the crisis it has created in teacher recruitment and retention. It cannot gamble with children and young people's life chances by continuing to fail teachers.

PRIMARY SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES' TRAINING

On the afternoon of Friday 22nd January 2016 we will be holding a training and information event for all Wirral Primary School Representatives and Contacts who will be contacted shortly. In schools that do not have a Representative or Contact we will be asking all members to nominate someone to attend the event.

Friday 22nd January 2016 at Tranmere Rovers Football Club
Buffet lunch from 12.30 p.m.

The session will run until 4.00 p.m.

Topics to be covered include:

Performance Management, School Teachers Pay and Conditions, Communicating with Members and the Local Association and the Benefits of being in the NASUWT.

Please contact Anne Rycroft for further details
annerycroft@gmail.com or 0791 002 6695

NASUWT

MEMBER SUPPORT ADVICE TEAM

The dedicated number for
all members to access
help and advice.

Calls are free from all
landlines and mobile
phone networks:

03330 145550

Members can also e-mail to:
advice@mail.nasuwt.org.uk



If any member would like to contribute to the Wirral Association **NASUWT NEWSLETTER**, please contact Mick Robinson. Tele: 0151 327 3277 or E-mail: mickrobinson@nasuwt.net
Previous issues of the **NEWSLETTER** can be viewed on our website.

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www.wirralassociationnasuwt.org